



Reciprocal

Heather Couch

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Love knows no limits or boundaries. Can we choose who we love? In this new world that the government has created, we aren't free to choose. I have fallen in love with a person from another realm. They are called the Peregrinus and we know virtually nothing about them. There are rebels amongst our people who want to destroy us. They want to eliminate the Peregrinus. They feel threatened that they are trying to take over our country like the long ago terrorists. This war brewing isn't unfamiliar to my country and I wonder at what cost it will stop. For me, I long to choose who I can love but it may cost me my life. Is love worth the fight?

Reciprocal Details

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Author : Heather Couch

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We Said It: Literary Reviews w/ Ts Blogging says

Title: First Draft

Reciprocal by Heather Couch

Reviewed by S. Davis

November 27, 2015

9:30 p.m.

Reciprocal by Heather Couch is a young adult novel about a high school student, Alicia, and the whirlwind she is thrown into when an alien race, Peregrinus, crash lands into her hometown. She falls in love with Stephen, a member of the Peregrinus, just when a war breaks out amongst the humans and the aliens.

Reciprocal is a typical modern science-fiction novel set in an alternate universe that has become so popular within the last decade.

The idea for the novel is original and promising. However, the version of the novel I read was not worthy of anything but a first draft. There were multiple grammatical mistakes, words missing, and run-on sentences. The author also pulled definitions in the foreword of the novel from Wikipedia, which is extremely unprofessional. The novel was not yet ready to be published by any means.

There were also a lot of events happening within the novel that made it hard for the reader to distinguish what was happening, when, and to which characters. Too many overarching themes were crammed into one novel that made the content seem more cliché than clever. There was no linear plot that the reader could follow because the novel jumped around from one event, character, or timeframe without warning. The characters themselves were tremendously inconsistent as if they were not yet fully developed by Couch. The author also does a lot of “telling” rather than “showing;” she takes the time to explain every little detail rather than letting the actions of the characters explain itself.

Once again, Couch has a really good start for a novel, but the action needs to be spread over multiple books so that the reader doesn’t feel rushed while reading. Couch also needs to go back and line-edit every sentence she wrote in the book and try publishing again.

This version of Reciprocal was a good first draft of the novel, but it definitely needs to be worked with more in order to be taken seriously.

I give Reciprocal 1 out of 5 stars.

Until next time,

S. Davis

Aly says

This book was very different for me. I do like Sci-fi but I have to say am picky about my Sci-fi. I enjoyed the

love story in this book. The charterers were interesting and I was impressed with the writing of the author I will read more of this series. * I received this book from the author in exchange for an honest review*

Laura Smith says

"Reciprocal" is a dystopian YA novel that readers who are fans of books like the "Hunger Games" series will enjoy. The characters are fighting their way through the ruins of the United States which (is at war unlike any other in the history we know) while trying to deal with the everyday pressures of teenage life and love. Couch has built a very clear and intricate world which can be very overwhelming for a non-scifi reader like me to follow. The book also still requires some heavy editing but is overall on the right path to becoming a strong first edition in her planned series.

Sheila says

Honestly, I gave up on this book. There were so many grammatical errors and places where the author changed her mind about things but didn't thoroughly go through the book to change them. The writing seemed very juvenile .

Nikki Sojkowski says

***This review and more can be found at my blog Love at First Write ***

I was given a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

I've got to be honest, this is probably the worst novel I've ever read. However, I do not believe this is entirely the author's fault, that the foundation plot is intriguing, and that simple tweaks could have easily made this a 3 or 4 star book. For this foundational plot the book gets 2 stars because this really could have been great. This book clearly was just not meant to be published yet. One key reason? As Heather told me herself, there was obviously no read through or editing done by the publishing company. I started off reading with the notes section of my phone on to record spelling errors or grammatical mistakes, eventually the task became too large and tedious for me to continue because there were multiple on every page. There were even instances where the character's names were spelled wrong or the wrong character was mentioned. An editing service could have easily fixed these issues and considering Heather is now on her third re-write, I hope this problem has been fixed.

Another issue I had was how rushed the book felt. Events that could have been pages, even chapters, were done away with in mere sentences. This tell instead of show writing style was off putting and made the story and characters distant from the reader, additionally this just made the book seem awkward. 30 pages into the novel and I had been in and out of the town of Mobile, had a race of aliens thrust upon me (which wasn't explained the entire book), the main character (or at least I think she was the main character) was kidnapped, and the main character's pseudo-boyfriend was behind the kidnapping and was actually evil, and there are about 20 different teenage characters and I haven't gotten a chance to know any of them yet. I don't even think I could give a single character's name after the first 30 pages. Overwhelming to say the least. By page

169 I could name names, but I didn't know the characters well, and I definitely didn't care about any of them. The writing was underdeveloped and stiff. By elaborating and creating more detail these flaws could be easily fixed. Establish things that the characters know, such as Castra, Infinity, Tutus, Pestis, or even characters before they become crucial to the plot, even while they're crucial to the plot is tolerable, but please explain them instead of inserting a word that's never been mentioned before and never gets explained. For example, "Victoria explained the old customs of soul mates sharing hearts," ok... I guess that helps the character? But as the author you did not actually explain anything and I am still just as confused as before this sentence. This literally tells me nothing about sharing hearts aside from it being a 'old custom' (p158). Earlier on, someone was giving a speech and instead of just writing a quote and giving me some hearty writing I just got a single sentence saying "they were the same commands every dictator gave before trying to take over the world" that's nice, so you're not going to actually tell me what he said? And then this huge battle happens in literally 2 sentences. TWO SENTENCES. I am writing more details to explain this than the book! Along the same lines is the use of adjectives. The same ones were used over and over in neighboring sentences. It felt like a word search where the same vowel is used multiple times in a row creating an unusable chunk of the puzzle. No English word has 5 E's in a row. No book should use the word 'technology' this often. Not even a science textbook.

Reading a book should not be this mentally draining trying to piece together everything because the author left so much out. There is just so much I'm still confused about. Why has the federal government not interfered? Aliens literally crashed onto the earth. Why is the federal or even state government not involved? How did aliens seriously go unnoticed? Why did aliens crash all over the U.S. over years at a time? Some many ships not travelling together just happen to crash on the same planet? The government is entirely incompetent and these teenagers have a ridiculous amount of sway. They haven't even graduated high school. They've never even left this town before. How are they more effective than people trained to be in political seats of power? How can Stephen's dad, who's been dead for an undetermined amount of time, have waited 17 years for peace with the humans when about the only thing that has been established is that they crashed on Earth 10 years ago. This is less crucial, but Alicia's mom is totally alive, so why doesn't she wear her engagement ring? You're supposed to wear that right next to the wedding band. Why is it just in a box? Why is she not upset with the fact that her daughter literally stole this expensive piece of jewelry that is a symbol of her parent's marriage. Why did her mom's engagement ring just become Alicia's? An easy fix would just be to make it the grandmother's old ring.

This book could have easily been twice as long, or split into two different books and I would have been much happier. The Chitimacha tribe is never mentioned the second half of the book, but they were made out to be the main bad guys for the first 100 or so pages. I still don't entirely understand that organization or where they just disappeared to or why a group of teenagers on the battlefield changes anything at all, but that whole plot could have been expanded upon and made into its own arc. The second half of the book villainizes Michelle for seemingly no reason whatsoever and has Stephen's uncle be the real secret bad guy. Again, this could have been its own separate arc. Too much is squished into this one novel.

Another flaw was how the plot moves un-linearly but does not indicate any change. It flows one paragraph to the next leaving me confused and grasping at straws trying to put together what just happened. Similarly, it switches POV's with no indication whatsoever. What would have been best would be to switch between Alicia and Stephen's POV and theirs only, maybe a different POV per chapter. Then start the book off with the aliens crashing to earth and the two of them meeting. Establish the aliens, their markings, their special abilities, their inability to be in the sun, and their segregation right off the bat instead of randomly bringing up facts after I thought I already somewhat knew the situation yet never once got a description of what these aliens look like throughout the entire book.

I know it seems like I'm totally bashing this novel, the the basic plot is definitely cool and interesting. This had so much potential. If the grammatical errors were fixed, the expanding upon of details and information happened, as well as the rearrangement of the non-linear scenes in a way that made sense, this book could easily jump up to 3 stars. Having less characters but developing and creating three dimensional characters with the one's left over could easily have added on another star. I will be reading Constant (book 2) next and will give you guys an update about the writing.

Stephanie says

Reciprocal is the first in a romantic adventure fantasy series. The story is unique and thrilling and has you holding your breathe through several heart pounding scenes. Heather Couch certainly has a unique story that, with some editing and fine tuning, will certainly be a hit with readers looking for love and adventure. The characters are faced with the seemingly impossible task of integrating an alien race with humans who would rather leave them to fend for themselves. The story is filled with adventures, thrilling moments, some romance, and of course, heartbreak and loss.

I believe that this series holds serious promise and I look forward to continuing the series to see how these characters overcome and, hopefully, succeed in their mission to create a tolerant world.

<http://novelideareviews.blogspot.com/...>

Brittany says

This was a good read. Science fiction plus romance is always good and this books is no exceptions. I liked how it showed that hatred can be concurred by love and that two people who seem to be worlds apart can battle through anything as long as they stay true to themselves and their love for one another.

Christina says

I was a little apprehensive about writing a review for this book because I'm not very good at writing them but I'll try to make it as spoiler free as possible.

The love story was adorable (something I can always appreciate)! I've never really read anything like this. I'm not really into scifi Across the Universe kind of books, but I thought this was an interesting world to dive into.

The beginning got a bit confusing with all the characters and setting kind of jumbled together, but after a while things started to make sense. Speaking of characters- can we talk about how nice it is that these characters had normal names? With aliens and humans mixed in you normally get suck crazy character names. Props go out to be greatest BFF name of all time! *wink wink*

Overall the world was interesting, the characters were solid, and the love story was so sweet. The last chapter! So adorable.

I think people who are fans of the uncanny, displacement, or the concept of finding a new home, will

defiantly enjoy this book.

Jordan says

Review forthcoming.
